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**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (currently amended): An external preparation for skin, which comprises a multi-branched polysaccharide compound with multi-branched polysaccharide skeleton consisting of saccharides selected from 1,6-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-glucopyranose, 1,6-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-mannopyranose, 1,6-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-galactopyranose, 1,6-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-allopyranose, 1,6-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-altropyranose, 1,4-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-ribopyranose, 1,4-anhydro- $\alpha$ -D-xylopyranose, 1,4-anhydro- $\alpha$ -L-arabinopyranose, 1,4-anhydro- $\alpha$ -D-lyxopyranose, 1,3-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-glucopyranose, 1,3-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-mannopyranose, 1,2-anhydro- $\alpha$ -D-glucopyranose, 1,2-anhydro- $\beta$ -D-mannopyranose, and 5,6-anhydro- $\alpha$ -D-glucopyranose as constituent units, wherein at least one of hydroxyl (OH) groups in the multi-branched polysaccharide skeleton is substituted by OR wherein R represents a hydrogen atom, a hydrocarbon having 1 to 30 carbon groups or a hydrocarbon having 1 to 30 carbon groups which has hetero atom,

wherein the amount of the multi-branched polysaccharide contained therein is 0.5% mass% or more,

the branching degree of the multi-branched polysaccharide is 0.05 to 1.00, and

the external preparation for skin is a liquid or lotion.

2-3. (canceled).